Honoring Our Relationships: Building a Safe Church Community

2018 Manual

The Episcopal Church in Vermont

A Prayer for the Human Family

(Book of Common Prayer, p 815)

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Prayer attributed to St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, union;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. *Amen.*

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The Baptismal Covenant

Episcopalians proclaim the following in our Baptismal Covenant.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?
People I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?
People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?
People I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
People I will, with God's help.

HONORING OUR RELATIONSHIPS: BUILDING A SAFE CHURCH COMMUNITY

*"...for the preservation of the safest possible environments within the church..." **

Since May 1994, education in sexual conduct has been required of Vermont Episcopal clergy, postulants, candidates, lay employees and certain categories of volunteers. This education is presented in two modules: (1) preventing sexual harassment and exploitation in the workplace and in pastoral relationships, and (2) Safeguarding God's Children: preventing sexual abuse of children and youth in church settings.

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Common Prayer reminds us, "The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests and deacons" (BCP, page 855). All ministers of the Church are called to represent Christ and to proclaim by word and deed the Good News of God's tender love for all of humanity. The quality of our relationships is one of the most important ways in which this vocation is carried out, particularly where power and authority are disproportionate. Any pastoral relationship, whether with clergy or lay ministers, is a relationship of authority and trust. When authority is misused to deny others their God-given dignity and human stature, a sacred obligation is broken. Being Christian is not by itself sufficient to keep persons from misusing power and authority, especially if they are not aware that their role in a relationship may give them that power and authority. When misuse of authority and power occur, the church is obliged to act with sensitivity and compassion toward all, making justice and restoring right relationships.

Sexual conduct education in the Episcopal Church in Vermont, and throughout the wider church, is intended to help all of us who serve the church to be aware of the issues of power and authority involved in church leadership. The church is meant to be a place of safety, sanctuary, respect and Christian love for all people. "Sexual Misconduct", the broad term covering the ways in which power, authority and trust are misused in a sexual way, is a violation of the Baptismal Covenant, through which we promise:

> *To seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves.*
> *To strive for justice and peace among all people, and*
> *To respect the dignity of every human being (BCP, page 305)*

The purpose of this manual and of the Diocesan program of sexual conduct education is to help to inform and provide resources for the faith community to prevent abuse of all of God's children, whether that abuse is expressed sexually or in other misuses of power and authority. All of us have responsibility for making our church (congregations, institutions and programs) a safe haven for all of God's people. This is

why sexual conduct education in the Episcopal Church in Vermont includes information which helps us learn to recognize signs that a child or young person may be suffering abuse or neglect, and gives the steps to take to get help for such a person and the family. Church leaders, especially teachers and youth leaders, are often in a position to recognize and get help for troubled young people.

Issues of sexual misconduct are emotionally charged. It is natural that when these issues are discussed, people find that some of their responses are rooted in fear, though they also desire to do what is right. It can be uncomfortable for us to deal with what we need to learn about these matters so that the church can be a beacon for society rather than a mirror of it, as it speaks pastorally and prophetically to this difficult topic.

Because we believe in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, we are called to create an environment which affirms the dignity and worth of every person as lovingly created in the image of God. It is our responsibility to denounce oppression in all forms, including sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment. It must be our intention to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct behavior which is contrary to this commitment. We want the church to be a place where parents can leave a child and expect the child to come home whole and not broken…where vulnerable people can go for counseling and prayer, and come away intact, better than they were when they went, not crawling away wounded from an attack on their integrity.

The wider community expects the church to be a safe place…safe physically (from fire, accident, and decay) and safe spiritually and emotionally. When that trust is broken, many victims are created throughout the entire community, the wider community is hurt and the church has done damage to the cause of the Gospel.

Every Anglican diocese in this country, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia is now carrying out a program of prevention of sexual misconduct in church environments. The church has experienced difficulty because it has not dealt with misconduct in a healthy way, but the days of cover-up are over. Silence about these matters does not serve justice. Prayer, though surely we must pray, should not simply be a way to avoid dealing with the pain of victims and with the spiritual illness of perpetrators.

All of us desire to be a part of restoring the trust the community must have in the church in order for the church to be an agent of ministry. The community needs to know that the church is not a "cover-up" institution, and that misconduct will be dealt with quickly, decisively, fairly and redemptively. The community also needs to know that the church is continuing to educate clergy and lay leaders for responsible and caring ministry.

"Who must attend this training?"

People in the following groups must attend, within the first six months of employment or volunteer placement (or as soon as an opportunity becomes available), a workshop in the Episcopal Church in Vermont.

Clergy who are canonically resident or licensed and any clergy person desiring to exercise ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church in Vermont

Employees of the Episcopal Church in Vermont, including:
Ministry Support Team members, all maintenance and office volunteers
Staff and Volunteers for Rock Point Summer Camps and any other diocesan-sponsored activity for children and/or youth
Employees of a Congregation
Eucharistic Visitors licensed by the Bishop
Lay Pastors authorized by the Bishop
Everyone, paid or volunteer, **who supervises children or youth activities, or someone who ministers with a person or people of any vulnerable population**

The Episcopal Church in Vermont strongly encourages **all other leaders and members of our congregations** to attend safe church training to learn about prevention practices and how to deal with any possible allegation of misconduct or abuse within their church community, particularly with regard to clergy or lay leadership.

The Episcopal Church in Vermont **urges congregations to adopt safe church policies** which are consistent with Diocesan Policy (see pp 20-23 and 45-52 of this Manual), including a requirement that all employees of the congregation and anyone who supervises children's and/or youth activities, whether paid and volunteer, must attend a safe church training and be properly screened for ministry.

"Why do I have to take this training when I have already received similar training for my job or volunteer work?

This question arises over and over again when people are informed that attending sexual conduct education is one of the conditions of their positions or ministries.

A number of church workers, paid and volunteer, clergy and lay, have had extensive professional training in these areas because they are teachers, psychologists, or hold other positions that require it. Many have also had experience dealing with the painful consequences of sexual misconduct in the lives of those they care for. Why, then, are such people asked to attend these workshops?

1. There are **special circumstances in church settings** that are not found in other environments. Church-related sexual conduct education covers those circumstances, which include the relationships between clergy or lay leaders with groups and individuals in counseling, educational and worship situations. Leadership roles in church settings have a particular kind of power and authority that is not always obvious, either to the people exercising those roles or to others around them. Unawareness of these dynamics may result in overlooking situations in which precautions need to be taken against sexual misconduct and false charges of misconduct.

2. There is value to **participating in this education with other members of one's congregation** and with other people in our church whose position in a congregation may be similar to one's own. As together we deepen our awareness of the need to work toward safer church environments, we also pray together for God's church. We pray for the healing of individuals, families, congregations and communities who have been

hurt by misconduct in the past or by the church's inability to deal with it in a way which leads to justice, mercy, and wholeness. This strengthens our whole faith community.

3. **All participants in workshops benefit** when people are present who are keenly aware of issues of sexual misconduct and who are experienced in helping those affected. This sharing of gifts and experience builds up the caring church. We are grateful to the many generous-spirited and wise professionals - nurses, teachers, counselors, priests - who attend sexual conduct workshops in Vermont.

"What are Basic Training and Re-Certification and what do I need to complete?" All persons required to complete Vermont's "Honoring Our Relationships" training must first complete the basic six-hour training. The basic training must be refreshed every five years by completing re-certification. If the basic training is not maintained through re-certification every five years, the basic training will need to be repeated.

Re-certification can be completed either by attending a three-hour re-certification workshop or completing on-line re-certification requirements. To access online re-certification, contact the diocesan Safer Church Training Coordinator (see page 59).

About the Curriculum

Human sexuality is a precious, powerful, and mysterious creative gift of God, and one for which we give thanks. Historic Christianity celebrates the loving and creative use of all human endowments. Of necessity, the workshop curriculum deals with abuses related to sexuality. However, it is important to keep in mind that these abuses are overwhelmingly abuses of power**,** in which the perpetrator uses sex as a weapon or manipulative device.

Preventing Sexual Misconduct material is for all ministers in our church, lay and ordained, and focuses on the *prevention* of misconduct. Clergy and lay leaders represent the power and authority of the church and divine power for those with whom they do ministry. Understanding relationships and being aware of how power and authority impact them is important information which warrants consistent reminders.

Ministry with and among elderly people and people with disabilities is an important part of our common life in the church. All ministers will benefit from an awareness and understanding of the material presented regarding abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable populations.

Safeguarding God's Children and Youth provides information needed to protect the children we know and care for in our personal lives and in the ministries in which we serve. The program is based on the philosophy that if every adult can protect just one child, they will forever change one life. If we can all change one life, together we will make a difference in this generation of children.

Preventing Sexual Misconduct

RELATIONSHIPS

People in a pastoral or lay leadership position establish a relationship of **TRUST** and **FAITHFULNESS.**

A **PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP is** a relationship between a clergy person, employee or volunteer and any person (child, youth or adult) to whom such clergy person, employee or volunteer provides counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction or spiritual guidance or from whom such clergy person, employee, or volunteer has received confession or confidential or privileged information.

People in these roles establish a **FIDUCIARY RELATIONSHIP.** "Fiduciary" means "held in trust for another." It is a term which has traditionally been used legally to describe the responsibility of professionals to act in the best interests of their clients. A fiduciary responsibility for someone is a responsibility for safeguarding the interests and well-being of that person, for protecting that person and his/her interest against any danger, threat, or harm. A fiduciary responsibility may derive from a contract or role. It has both a legal and ethical dimension. In the pastoral relationship, a clergy person or lay leader has a **Fiduciary Duty**, which is an implied contract/covenant. It is a duty of **TRUST**. It is a charge to place the needs of others above one's own needs. Anyone ministering in an official capacity is obliged to act in the best interests of a congregant even when this action does not serve the minister's needs or interests.

A Relationship of
TRUST
and
FAITHFULNESS

Auctoritas vs. Imperium

Authority comes from the Latin auctoritas, meaning authorship, creativity, calling us into the fullness of our being. Imperium is tyranny, control.

-from The Rev. David Brown
Former Rector of Christ Church, Montpelier

Clergy and other Christian leaders have a "special charge" in both counseling and non-counseling relationships.

It is important to **AVOID DUAL RELATIONSHIPS!** It is not possible to be an intimate friend with a person for whom you have pastoral responsibilities. Dual relationships are sometimes described as "overlapping" relationships – that is, each person in the relationship has more than one role in the relationship (professional/friend, professional/lover, client/professional, etc.) and these roles overlap.

Power and Authority are linked with Responsibility and Awareness

Dual relationships almost always result in damage to, or loss of, the original relationship. Another problem with dual relationships is the potential harm to one or the other of the people involved. When a professional relationship becomes a dual relationship, the client's need for professional assistance usually comes into conflict with other needs (the client's personal needs, the professional's personal needs).

In ministry, some dual relationships are inevitable, because a minister often lives, works, and socializes in the same community. This is especially true for ministers working in a small community. In such cases, clergy and other ministers are responsible for monitoring dual relationships to ensure that congregants are not harmed. It is better for all concerns if ministers can avoid dual relationships by socializing with a group of people other than those he/she works with.

CIRCLES OF RELATIONSHIP

POWER begins when a position of authority and responsibility has been established and accepted. Power can arise from a number of sources and can be cumulative: occupation; experience or expertise; physical size, attractiveness, and/or ability; gender, age, race; wealth; charisma.

Power can be negative: a top-down control mechanism, primarily benefiting the one who holds it ***or*** Power can be positive: a *service* to benefit *others*.

Some sources of Power:

Authority or Responsibility
Occupation
Experience or Expertise
Physical Size or Attractiveness
Gender, Age, Race
Wealth
Charisma
Health
Lingo, Jargon

There is an **imbalance of power** between clergy and members of congregations or others in their care, as well as between lay leaders and those they lead. Because of this imbalance of power, it is important for Church leaders to know and understand their own power and authority, as well as how others perceive it.

CONSENT is full agreement in sentiment, opinion, etc. True and meaningful consent is achieved through mutual agreement without coercion or manipulation. When there is a power relationship or when there is a relationship of trust and faithfulness, this is especially problematic. Both children and adults sometimes act contrary to their natural inclinations and without true consent in relationship with one who holds a power position.

What power and/or authority do you have in your ministry?

The ability to give consent is affected by: age (being old enough to consent), the influence of alcohol or drugs, mental impairment, physical impairment, or other reasons for vulnerability. For example:

In crisis **-** When you (or anyone else) are in crisis, whether it is emotional, spiritual, or physical, you are at the most vulnerable point in your life. All you want is for the pain to stop. You are in the perfect position to be victimized by someone who can seemingly stop the pain.

After crisis - When the immediate crisis is past, you may be in a vulnerable position because of past history or other ongoing, less acute problems and/or relationships.

Without crisis - Any of us, whether or not we are involved in any emotional trauma past or present, can be vulnerable to exploitation when we are in relationship with someone we trust.

Susanna and the Elders (Book of Daniel, Chapter 13)

Joakim of Babylon, a well-respected, honorable, rich and godly man and an orchardist, took a wife whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Helicias. Susanna was a very beautiful God-fearing woman. Her just parents instructed their daughter in the law of Moses.

There were two elders appointed judges that year. These men frequented Joakim's house, and all that had any matters of judgment came to them.

One day, when the people departed at noon, Susanna went in, and walked in her husband's orchard. The two elders saw her going in every day, and walking: and they were inflamed with lust towards her. Knowing better, pushing aside shame, they peeked at her. They both wanted her but did not tell each other for they were ashamed to declare to one another their lust, each desiring her only for himself. They watched carefully every day to see her.

[Elder 1] ***Let us now go home.***

[Elder 2] ***Yes, for it is dinnertime***.

Going out, they departed one from another, but turning back again, they came both to the same place: and asking one another the cause, they acknowledged their lust: and then they agreed together upon a time, when they might find her alone.

On a nice day she went out again, with two maids only, wanting to wash herself in the orchard for it was hot weather. There was nobody there, but the two old men that had hid themselves, and were beholding her. She said to the maids:

[Susanna] ***Bring me oil, and washing balls, and shut the doors of the orchard, that I may wash.***

They shut the doors of the orchard, and went out by a back door to fetch what she had commanded them, without knowing the elders were hidden and watching. When the maids were gone, the two elders arose, and ran to her, and said**:**

[Elder 1] ***Behold the doors of the orchard are shut, and nobody can see us, and we are in love with you.***

[Elder 2] ***Consent to us, and lie with us. But if you do not, we will lie and say that a young man was with you, and you sent your maids away to be with him.***

Susanna sighed, and said**:**

[Susanna] ***I am caught on every side, for if I do this thing, it is death to me, and if I do it not, I shall not escape your hands. But it is better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord.***

With that Susanna cried out with a loud voice: and the elders also cried out against her. And one of them ran to the door of the orchard, and opened it. So when the servants of the

house heard the cry in the orchard, they rushed in by the back door, to see what was the matter.

After the old men had spoken, the servants were greatly ashamed, for never had there been any such word said of Susanna.

And on the next day, when the people came to Joakim, her husband, the two elders also came full of wicked words against Susanna, wanting to put her to death. They said before the people:

[Elder 1] ***Send for Susanna, daughter of Helicias.***

[Elder 2] ***Yes, bring us Susanna, the wife of Joakim, so we can judge her now!***

And presently they sent. She came with her parents, and children and all her kindred. Susanna was beautiful to behold, but those wicked men commanded that her face should be uncovered, (for she was covered) that so at least they might be satisfied with her beauty. As a result, her friends, and all her acquaintances wept. Even so the two elders laid their hands upon her head. She weeping, looked up to heaven, for her heart had confidence in the Lord. The elders said:

[Elder 1] ***As we walked in the orchard alone, this woman came in with two maids, and shut the doors of the orchard, and sent away the maids from her. Then a young man that was hiding there came to her, and lay with her.***

[Elder 2] ***We were in a corner of the orchard, and seeing this wickedness, ran up to them, and we saw them lie together. We could not stop him because he was stronger than us, and opening the doors, he leaped out. But having taken this woman, we asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us. Of this thing we are witnesses.***

The multitude believed them, being the elders and judges of the people, and they condemned her to death. Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said:

[Susanna] ***O eternal God, who knows hidden things, who knows all things before they come to pass, you know that they have borne false witness against me. Behold I must die, whereas I have done none of these things, which these men have maliciously forged against me.***

The Lord heard her voice, and when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young boy, whose name was Daniel who cried out with a loud voice:

[Daniel] ***I am clear from the blood of this woman.***

Then all the people turned towards him and said**:**

[People] ***What do these words mean that you have spoken?***

[Daniel] ***Are you so foolish, you children of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth, you have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return to judgment,***

for they have borne false witness against her. Separate these two far from one another, and I will examine them.

When they were separated one from another, he called one of them, and said to him**:**

[Daniel] ***O you that are grown old in evil days, now your sins come out, which you have committed before. In judging unjust judgments, oppressing the innocent, and letting the guilty to go free, but the Lord says: "The innocent and the just you shall not kill." Now then if you saw her, tell me under what tree you saw them conversing together?***

[Elder 1] ***Under a mastic tree.***

[Daniel] ***Well you have lied against your own head: for behold the angel of God having received the sentence of him, shall cut you in two.***

Then he commanded that the other should come, and he said to him:

[Daniel] ***Beauty has deceived you, and lust has perverted your heart. Now, therefore, tell me, under what tree did you see them conversing together.***

[Elder 2] ***Under a Holm tree.***

[Daniel] ***Well you have also lied against your own head: for the angel of the Lord waits with a sword to cut you in two, and to destroy you.***

With that all the assembly cried out with a loud voice, and they blessed God, who saves those who trust in him, and they rose up against the two elders, (for Daniel had convicted them of false witness by their own mouths) and they did to them as they had maliciously done against their neighbor, and they put them to death, and innocent blood was saved in that day.

But Helicias, and his wife, praised God, for their daughter, Susanna, with Joakim, her husband, and all her kindred, because there was no dishonesty found in her. And Daniel became great in the sight of the people from that day, and thence forward.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT DEFINITIONS

SEXUAL ABUSE is sexual molestation of any person, including any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent.

SEXUAL COERCION is the use of force - physical, emotional or supervisory - to gain sexual gratification.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION is the development of, or the attempt to develop, a sexual relationship between a clergy person, employee, or volunteer and a person with whom he or she has a pastoral relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual. In addition to any physical expression, exploitation includes any verbal suggestion of sexual involvement or sexually demeaning comments.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT applies to a situation where there is an employment, mentor or colleague relationship between the persons involved. Sexual harassment can range in behaviors from less serious to more serious; from jokes to flirting to innuendo to fondling to assault.

Sexual harassment includes any sexually-oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; repeated requests for social engagements. Comments and/or actions may communicate mixed messages. Sexual harassment can be any verbal, non-verbal or physical activity of a sexual nature that makes the recipient feel uncomfortable or threatened.

Sexual Harassment is a serious and costly issue that can cause reduced morale, reduced productivity, financial liability for the church and church officers, and financial liability for individuals. Court-ordered awards include injunctions, economic losses, compensatory damages for pain and suffering, punitive damages, and attorney fees. Settlements increasingly involve misconduct by lay leaders who are employees or volunteers.

Specific examples of Sexual Harassment include:

Verbal Harassment:
Sexual language or comments - explicit or innuendo
Using nicknames with sexual connotations (hunk, babe, doll, etc.)
Telling sexual jokes or stories
Spreading rumors, talking or asking questions about a person's sex life
Sexual comments about a person's anatomy or clothing

Non-Verbal Harassment:
Staring at someone
Facial expressions (winking, throwing kisses, etc.)
Displaying sexually suggestive visual materials such as calendars of nude, semi-nude, and/or provocatively posed females or males
Making sexual gestures with hands or body movements

Physical Harassment:
An unwanted massage of shoulders, back or neck
Touching hair, clothing, or body
Brushing up against someone
Prolonged hugs, especially with hands moving down the back or pelvic contact

Some Misconceptions about Sexual Harassment

- Victims "ask for it" through behavior or dress.
- Only women are sexually harassed.
- Sexual harassment takes place more often in blue collar than in white collar environments.
- Men and women agree on what type of behavior constitutes sexual harassment.
- If there are not complaints, it means that there are not problems.
- Most charges are false.

When is it Sexual Harassment?

Determining your behavior:

Would you say or do the same thing if your spouse or significant partner was nearby?

Would you feel comfortable if your comments or behavior were reported on the front page of the congregation's newsletter?

Would it be acceptable to you if the same behavior or comments were directed at you or someone you care about?

Would you be comfortable video recording an interaction and showing it to a supervisor or colleague?

Determining another's behavior:

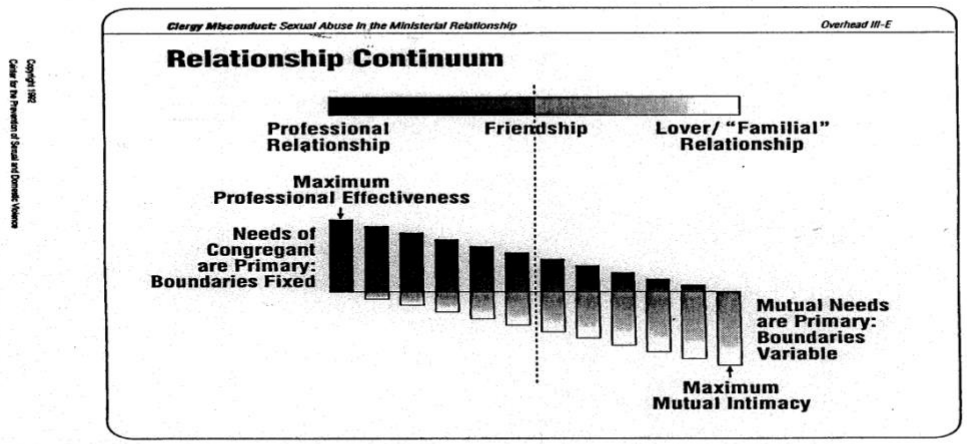
How would the alleged "harasser" respond to the previous questions?
Is the behavior unwelcome and personally directed?

Offensive, insulting, and/or hurtful behavior or comments may be considered harassment regardless of the intention of the actor, even if the receiver seems to be "going along" with the behavior.

Courts are now using the "reasonable woman" guideline, as well as the more familiar "reasonable man" standard. That is, if the complainant is a woman, the court will judge

the objectionable behavior according to whether it would be considered offensive by a "reasonable woman", thus recognizing that men's and women's perceptions differ in these matters.

Other Possible Liability Claims:defamation of character, invasion of privacy, negligence, misrepresentation, assault and battery, emotional distress (intentional and/or negligent).



SETTING HEALTHY PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

BOUNDARIES are the first step toward prevention of sexual misconduct. A boundary is a limiting of one's own internal activities and/or a way to ward off external unwanted behaviors from others.

Begin With Yourself:

Examine your reactions, physical and emotional, to the subject of sex, sexuality, sexual relations—are you comfortable or uncomfortable and why?

How were you first educated about sex, sexuality and sexual relations? What are your first recollections?

Acknowledge to yourself or to other professionals your own personal sexual responses to individuals or situations that are attractive or unattractive, boring or exciting, safe or dangerous.

Extend To Others:

How do you communicate your reactions, feelings, thoughts about sex and sexuality to others: casual acquaintances, close friends, children, spouse or intimate partner?

When are you comfortable or not comfortable doing so?

Some Clues to Boundary Violations:

The relationship must be kept secret

"Special" attention to attire and/or appearance

Inappropriate gifts or expressions of affection

Recurring sense of discomfort or dread, or an inappropriate "rush" of excitement, anticipation

Counselors (lay and ordained) are subject to the same feelings and attitudes as the people they counsel, being aware of this dynamic and having an understanding of **TRANSFERENCE** and **COUNTER-TRANSFERENCE** also play important roles in the prevention of sexual misconduct.

TRANSFERENCE is the counselee/client's unconscious attachment to the counselor, positively or negatively, as the counselee/client connects to feelings and attitudes related to important relationships in early life.

COUNTER-TRANSFERENCE is the counselor's unconscious response or attachment to a counselee/client, positive or negative, which connects to the counselor's feelings and attitudes outside of the professional role and serves to gratify the counselor's own physical and/or emotional needs.

BURNOUT can put a caregiver at risk for engaging in sexual misconduct. Some symptoms of burnout that may alert a caregiver to being at risk for sexual misconduct:

Sleep disorder; general fatigue; depression

Increase in family conflicts

Overwork to avoid going home

Not taking vacation days; not including spouse or family in plans

Dreaming/fantasizing about colleagues or parishioners

Substance abuse

Family history of abuse

Failure to maintain personal devotional life beyond sermon preparation or preparation for lay ministry

Know The Ethical Considerations:

- No sexual relationships are acceptable between an ordained pastor and ***any*** parishioner or employee.

- No sexual relationships are acceptable between a lay person and another person with whom he or she is ministering in a pastoral role.

Participate In Accountability:

- Create, develop and be part of a network of supervisors and peers.

Establish Priorities:

- Pay attention to yourself, the demands of your household and your ministry.
- Pay attention to your personal devotional path.

Recognize And Obey Warnings:

- Set and continually re-examine and, if necessary, re-define, your personal sexual boundaries.

Bullying

Bullying is a misuse of power and control issues and may be subtle or obvious. It is a growing national problem that has received a great deal of needed attention in the past several years. Bullying can be both face-to-face and electronic. Digital devices and social media can be used for bullying and for sexual exploitation.

Cyber-bullying, electronic sexual exploitation and predation and cyber safety are addressed in another section of this Manual, including bullying facts and statistics. While there are little or no statistics available on adult bullying, it is reported as a growing problem. In the church world, clergy and lay leaders may, in exercising their power, bully employees, parishioners or other clergy. Unmodulated anger may come off as bullying but most bullying is less overt. Bullying in the church world may be face- to-face or happen in emails, phone calls or online in other ways.

Bullying is the act of one person using strength or status to infringe on another person, whether with insults, threats, physical harm, ostracism, or infringing on their boundaries in any way (to clarify, some see sexual harassment as a subset of bullying, but others see them as separate categories). The goal of an adult bully is to gain power over another person, and make himself or herself the dominant adult. They try to humiliate victims, and "show them who is boss."[1]

Shaming or belittling another person in overt and covert ways is often part of bullying. Many adult bullies were either bullies as children or were themselves bullied.

[1] From the website, *Stop Bullying, harassment and violence. http://www.bullyingstatistics.org*

Classic bullying in a school would be the use of a chair in a corner, a dunce cap or announcing a student's poor grade out loud to the class. Remembering that adult bullying is based on shaming and belittling, some possible examples from the church world might be: pressuring parishioners into doing service they do not want to do, assertions in meetings that people don't know what they're talking about or are not entitled to their opinions, criticizing a persons' performance as lector or acolyte in a public and belittling way, berating people's moral standards publicly, etc.

It is the nature of church environments that clergy and lay leaders function in iconic roles and as such are greater magnets for perceived, or actual, complaints and slights. Because of this, facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and inclusive or exclusive actions of church people in leadership roles take on greater meaning for others. Clergy and lay leaders should be particularly thoughtful and aware of how their words and actions are perceived. Self-awareness, insight, and perspective-taking skills are particularly important for clergy and church leaders such as Senior Wardens and vestry members. Having a peer group for clergy, or for lay leaders, is helpful in talking through some of these issues if a person in leadership finds that he or she is eliciting confusing reactions from parishioners or is feeling misunderstood or misperceived.

Responses to bullying are similar to harassment or abuse of power. Similar channels can be used such as reporting the person to a rector or other supervisor in the church. If the alleged bully is a clergy person, a report should be made to the Diocesan Intake Officer (Contact information on p 59 of this Manual).

For Reflection

What is your immediate reaction to the situations described below? What is the best way to handle each situation?

SITUATION: A staff person is dating a parishioner.

SITUATION: During the "peace" one parishioner insists on giving everyone a firm bear hug.

SITUATION: You notice that your rector has been receiving gifts from another parishioner that have become more extravagant over time.

In each situation below:
Who/what are your resources?
How do you react?
Why did you make this decision?

A Sunday School teacher shares an "adult" joke with another teacher, no children are around.

A parishioner begins asking you personal questions about the clergy.

Name three things that give YOU power over others.

What would be one way to tell if someone overstepped your boundaries?

Does physical contact have to occur for harassment or exploitation to have taken place?

"It is only when our boundaries are secure that we can have boundless compassion, and it is under the guise of boundless compassion that boundary violations often occur."

Maggie Ross

A life-professed solitary and mystic
under vows to the Archbishop of Canterbury

Diocese of Vermont Policies and Procedures

Relating to Sexual Misconduct

As adopted by Diocesan Council February 17, 2018

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Diocese of Vermont strictly prohibits sexual misconduct of any type by any ordained person (deacon, transitional deacon, priest or bishop) canonically resident or functioning in the Diocese of Vermont, or any employee or volunteer authorized to perform work or provide services within the Church.

II. RATIONALE AND GOAL

The Church has long recognized the possibility of sexual misconduct on the part of her leaders and has sought to address such matters to the best of her knowledge and ability in ways that are pastorally appropriate and humane for both accuser and accused. It is necessary to define and codify the Church's expectations and responsibilities concerning such matters. In part, this is a concomitant of a greater awareness in American society of the problems of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation. In part, it is the result of federal legislation that makes sexual misconduct by persons in positions of authority - including church leaders - grounds for civil or criminal action. This document aims to communicate in clear and unequivocal language the expectations and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Vermont that will help to assure that our community remains free from the personal pain and destructive influences that necessarily arise through the perpetration of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation.

III. DEFINITIONS

The Diocese of Vermont adopts the Episcopal Church definitions in Title IV, Canon 2, including those of sexual abuse, sexual behavior, and sexual misconduct:

Sexual Abuse shall mean any Sexual Behavior at the request of, acquiesced to or by a person eighteen years of age or older and a person under eighteen years of age, in high school or legally incompetent.

Sexual Behavior shall mean any physical contact, bodily movement, speech, communication or other activity sexual in nature or that is intended to arouse or gratify erotic interest or sexual desires.

Sexual Misconduct shall mean (a) Sexual Abuse or (b) Sexual Behavior at the request of, acquiesced to or by a Member of the Clergy with an employee, volunteer, student or counselee of that Member of the Clergy or in the same congregation as the Member of the Clergy, or a person with whom the Member of the Clergy has a Pastoral Relationship.

IV. PROCEDURES TO AID THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Preservation of the safest possible environments within the church requires clear expectations, openness, and vigilant and sensitive cooperation on the part of aware and informed persons. Of particular importance are environments which present a high degree of risk or opportunity for sexual misconduct. These procedures represent the minimum of preventative measures to be observed in all such environments.

At the Time of Recruitment

1. All "Covered Persons" (as defined below) will be required to complete and sign an application form which specifically includes a request for personal references, information concerning any prior adjudication in regard to sexual misconduct, and acknowledgment of the church's right to conduct a confidential background check.

Compliance Assurance

2. Within the first thirty days of employment or assignment, all Covered Persons will be required to sign a statement indicating that they have read and understand, and intend to comply with, the Diocese of Vermont Policy and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct (this document).

An Informed Workforce*

3. Within the first six months of employment or assignment, all Covered Persons must receive full basic training on issues of sexual harassment and exploitation and on the prevention and detection of child sexual abuse in church settings. All persons engaged in high risk areas of service must participate in this training. All training must be provided or approved by the Diocese of Vermont. Covered Persons must complete re-certification training presented and/or approved by the diocese every five years.

<u>The following groups are "Covered Persons" and required to complete approved training program:</u>

Clergy who are canonically resident or licensed and any clergy person desiring to exercise ordained ministry in the Diocese of Vermont

Employees of the Diocese, including:

Ministry Support Team members, all maintenance and office volunteers

Staff and Volunteers for Rock Point Summer Camps and any other diocesan-sponsored activity for children and/or youth

Employees of a Congregation

Eucharistic Visitors licensed by the Bishop

Lay Pastors authorized by the Bishop

All members of Covenant Groups and Local Ministry Support Teams authorized by the Bishop

Everyone, **paid or volunteer**, **who supervises children or youth activities**

Everyone, paid or volunteer, who is engaged in any other high-risk area of service

The Diocese of Vermont strongly encourages **all other leaders and members of our congregations** to attend safe church training to learn about prevention practices and how to deal with any possible allegation of misconduct or abuse within their church community, particularly with regard to clergy and lay leadership.

The Diocese of Vermont **urges congregations to adopt safe church policies** which are consistent with Diocesan Policy, including a requirement that all employees of the congregation and anyone who supervises children and/or youth activities, whether paid or volunteer, must attend an approved safe church training program and be properly screened for ministry.

Risk Reduction

4. Whenever possible, persons engaged in high risk areas of service should arrange for a co-worker or chaperon to be present during the exercise of their duties. Activities which require one-on-one interactions should be conducted in an environment that provides for visibility by other adults.

Prohibition of Employment

5. Any Covered Person who refuses to complete and sign the required application form and assurances will not be admitted to the position or assignment in question.

Corrective Action

6. Any Covered Person who fails to comply with the above procedures should be immediately warned of the need for corrective action. Failure to correct a deficiency within a reasonable period of time will result in the prohibition of the person from further engagement in that area of service.

V. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT

The Bishop represents the principal authority of The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Vermont regarding all matters of sexual misconduct in which the alleged perpetrator is a Covered Person. The Canon on Ecclesiastical Discipline provides a process for dealing with such matters when the alleged perpetrator is a member of the ordained clergy. In other instances, the Bishop uses the process outlined in the Canon as a guide. In any matter of sexual misconduct, the Intake Officer is available to assist you in taking these steps.

Reporting Alleged Sexual Misconduct

1. Any person who believes her or himself to have been sexually abused, harassed or exploited by a Covered Person should report the matter directly to the Diocesan Intake Officer (see page 59).

Preliminary Investigation

2. When information concerning alleged sexual misconduct is received by the Diocesan Intake Officer (IO), the IO will determine whether the allegations, if true, constitute an offense for which a member of the clergy may be held accountable under the Title IV disciplinary canons. If the allegations are such an offense, the IO will consult with the Bishop and the President of the Disciplinary Board to determine further action consistent with the provisions of Title IV and the corresponding Diocesan Canons.

Protection of Rights

3. Throughout the investigation and any subsequent action, reasonable care will be diligently exercised to assure the privacy and due process rights of all parties.

If the Alleged Victim is a Minor

4. If the alleged victim is a minor, the Intake Officer must, immediately upon receiving a complaint or other information which, in her judgment, signifies sufficient cause to warrant a complaint, ascertain whether a report of suspected child sexual abuse has been filed with an appropriate official of the Vermont Agency of Human Services. If a report has not been filed, the IO must take such action as may be necessary to cause said report to be filed immediately.

Process for Responding to a Complaint

5. Title IV of The Episcopal Church Canons sets out a process to resolve questions regarding behavior of clergy and to provide pastoral care and response for those persons and communities aggrieved by a cleric's conduct. The Title IV process is designed to promote "healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected."

Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Vulnerable populations

The term **VULNERABLE ADULT** has a very specific meaning as defined by Vermont law. A person is a vulnerable adult if he/she:

is age 18 or older; AND
is a resident of a licensed facility such as a nursing or community care home; OR
is a patient on a psychiatric unit or in a psychiatric hospital; OR
has received personal care services for longer than 1 month; OR
regardless of residence or whether any type of service is received, is impaired due to brain damage, infirmities of aging, or a physical, mental, or developmental disability.

Most elders and people with disabilities manage their own lives and are capable of providing for their own care without assistance and capable of protecting themselves from abuse, neglect or exploitation. These individuals would not meet the statutory definition of "vulnerable adult."

ABUSE OF VULNERABLE ADULTS is defined by Vermont law as:

- any treatment which places his or her life, health, or welfare in jeopardy or which is likely to result in impairment of health;
- any conduct committed with intent or reckless disregard that such conduct is likely to cause unnecessary pain, harm or suffering;
- unnecessary or unlawful confinement or restraint of a vulnerable adult;
- intentionally subjecting a vulnerable adult to behavior which should reasonably be expected to result in intimidation, fear, humiliation, degradation, agitation, disorientation, or other forms of serious emotional distress;
- any sexual activity by a caregiver who volunteers for or is paid by a care-giving facility or program;
- administration or threatened administration of a drug, substance, or preparation for a purpose other than legitimate and lawful medical or therapeutic treatment.

Examples:

Physical Abuse:	hitting, kicking, shoving, shaking, pinching, burning
	throwing objects at a vulnerable adult
	driving impaired with a vulnerable adult in the vehicle
Indicators:	unexplained bruises, burns, cuts, fractures, dislocations
	conflicting stories about injuries
	changes in physical or mental health (fear, withdrawal, anxiety)

frequent changes in health care professionals
forced isolation
signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists

Emotional or Behavioral Abuse:
yelling, swearing, name calling, bullying
making threats of abuse or abandonment
habitual blaming or scapegoating, humiliating, ridiculing
isolating a vulnerable adult from friends or family

Indicators:
changes in behavior/demeanor when a certain person is present
prevention of access to friends, family, telephone, social groups
changes in mental health – withdrawn, depressed, low self-esteem, anxious
changes in sleep patterns or appetite
unexplained fear or defensiveness

Sexual Abuse:
sexual assault and rape; any unwanted sexual touch or being forced to touch another in a sexual manner
forcing pornographic material on a vulnerable adult

Unlawful restraint:
tying a vulnerable adult to a bed or chair
locking a vulnerable adult in a room or house
over medicating

Substance administration abuse:
sharing of prescription medications
providing illegal or unwanted drugs
threatening to give a medication, drug, or substance if the vulnerable adult does not comply with the wishes of another person
giving higher or more doses of any prescribed medication

The indicators/warning signs noted should not be interpreted as "proof" that physical, sexual, or emotional abuse has occurred or is occurring, but serve as indications that a problem may exist.

NEGLECT OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS is defined by Vermont law as purposeful or reckless failure or omission by a caregiver to:

- provide care or arrange for goods or services necessary to maintain the health or safety of a vulnerable person;
- protect a vulnerable person from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by others;

- carry out a plan of care for a vulnerable person when such failure results in or could reasonably be expected to result in physical or psychological harm or a substantial risk of death to the vulnerable person;
- report significant changes in the health status of a vulnerable person to a physician, nurse, or immediate supervisor, when the caregiver is employed by an organization that offers, provides or arranges for personal care;
- neglect may be repeated conduct or a single incident which has resulted in or could be expected to result in physical or psychological harm.

Examples:

failure to provide adequate food and nutrition
failure to seek medical treatment for injuries or illnesses
unsanitary living conditions
unsuitable clothing or covering for the weather
unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water, faulty electrical wiring…)
desertion of the vulnerable person
failure to give prescribed medications or giving too much of the medication
failure to follow a plan of care when failing to could result in physical or psychological harm to the vulnerable person

Indicators:

poor hygiene
weight loss, malnourishment
untreated injuries or health conditions
lack of adequate clothing or personal care items
lapses in medication pick-up and administration
frequently missed physician appointments

EXPLOITATION OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS is defined by Vermont law as:

- willfully using, withholding, transferring or disposing of funds or property of a vulnerable person without or in excess of legal authority for the wrongful profit or advantage of another;
- acquiring possession or control of or an interest in funds or property of a vulnerable person through the use of undue influence, harassment, duress, or fraud;
- the act of forcing or compelling a vulnerable person against his or her will to perform services for the profit or advantage of another;
- any sexual activity with a vulnerable person when the vulnerable person does not consent or when an individual knows or should know that the vulnerable person is incapable of resisting or declining consent to the sexual activity due to age or disability or due to fear of retribution or hardship, whether or not an individual has actual knowledge of vulnerable status.

Examples:

illegally withdrawing money from an account or forging checks;
unauthorized use of credit cards or using a vulnerable person's identity to obtain credit
stealing or "borrowing" household items
threatening a vulnerable person to get compliance
forcing or coercing a vulnerable person to engage in sexual activity

Indicators:

frequent checks made out to "cash"
missing checks, credit cards
numerous unpaid bills
frequent expensive gifts from the vulnerable person to the caregiver or other person
missing possessions
purchase of items that the vulnerable person does not or cannot use

Who abuses, neglects or exploits vulnerable populations?

A vulnerable person could be subjected to abuse, neglect or exploitation by just about anyone, including:

- a partner, child, relative
- a friend or neighbor
- a personal care attendant or home care provider
- a stranger
- facility or agency staff
- another vulnerable adult

RISK FACTORS Particular groups of people may be more at risk for being abused, neglected and exploited. These groups may include people isolated from the community by language barriers, cognitive or psychiatric disabilities, living alone, recent loss of spouse or companion, dementia, and homelessness. There may be:

Individual Factors, such as communication difficulties by the vulnerable person, physical and/or emotional dependence on caregiver;

Relationship Factors, such as unequal distribution of power and decision making in relationships, lack of boundaries, stress of career, isolation, lack of support;

Environmental Factors, such as overcrowding, poor or insecure living conditions, geographical isolation.

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES If a vulnerable person fully or partially discloses that he or she has been the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation:

DO: Remain calm
Listen attentively

Be reassuring
Treat the disclosure seriously
Allow the vulnerable adult to talk with privacy
Only ask open-ended questions (for example: "what happened next?" instead of "did he push you down?") BUT do not conduct an investigation
Explain that a report to Adult Protective Services will be made
Document in as much detail as possible
Save any evidence
Report to Adult Protective Services

DO NOT:
Promise to keep secrets
Make promises you cannot keep
Make assumptions
Be judgmental
Stop someone who is freely recalling events
Contact the alleged perpetrator
Destroy evidence

There are many reasons vulnerable populations may be **RELUCTANT TO REPORT MISTREATMENT OR ACCEPT HELP**. Primary reasons are:

- Denial -Unconsciously or consciously the victim is not able to acknowledge that the abuse is occurring. This kind of "denial" is common among elderly victims and is also seen in children and younger battered women. For example, an elderly woman who has been battered throughout her marriage by her spouse may see abuse as "normal" because she has nothing against which to compare the abusive situation.

- Self-Blame - Physical and mental abuse over time can wear away the victim's sense of identify and self-esteem to the extent that she or he comes to believe she or he "deserves" or has provoked the abuse. It is often easier for victims to identify themselves as the wrongdoers rather than their children, spouses, other family members, or caregivers.

- Shame and Embarrassment - Vulnerable populations are often ashamed to admit to being mistreated by someone related to them. They may feel that to admit the abuse will reflect badly on their past parenting abilities or family name.

- Dependency - Vulnerable populations may be abused by people upon whom they depend for a large part of their care. Victims often fear that if they report the

abuse, the caregiver will abandon them. They may also fear losing their homes and being forced to move into a nursing home when they can no longer survive alone.

- Loyalty to Caregiver - Typically, the caregiver who is abusing a vulnerable adult does not treat the adult in their care badly all the time. Victims may experience frustration about reporting the abuse because they feel genuine love and loyalty toward the abusive caregiver. This is especially likely if the caregiver is a family member.

- Fear of Retaliation - Victims often fear that reporting may cause the abuser to retaliate against them, and perhaps to escalate the abuse. Studies have indicated that these fears may be well founded.

- Physical Inability to Report - Victims may lack the physical ability to report. They may be bedridden or have limited mobility and lack access to authorities because they have no transportation. Abusers may deliberately isolate their elderly victims from access to help.

- Perceptions of the System - Vulnerable populations may not know they can report abuse or they may lack information about where to call for help. They may also feel that social service agencies and the criminal justice system will not be sympathetic or responsive to their needs. They may fear that no one will believe them or that they will be regarded as incompetent simply because of their age or disability, and that their right to decide their own future will be threatened or eroded. They may also fear that their only caregiver will be taken away, leaving them alone.

Ephesians 5:8-14

Once you were darkness, but now in the
Lord you are light.
Live as children of light – for the fruit of the
light is found in all that is good and right and
true.
Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord.
Take no part in the unfruitful works of
darkness, but instead expose them.
For it is shameful even to mention what such
people do secretly;
but everything exposed by the light becomes
visible, for everything that becomes visible is
light.
Therefore it says,
"Sleeper awake!
Rise from the dead, and
Christ will shine on you."

Safe-Guarding God's Children and Youth

CHILD ABUSE is purposeful or non-accidental mistreatment or neglect of a child resulting in injury or harm. Child abuse may take one of the following forms:

PHYSICAL:	beating, shaking, burning, etc.
EMOTIONAL:	verbal abuse, excessive punishment, withholding affection, etc.
NEGLECT:	failure to provide necessities of life, such as food, shelter, clothing, etc.
SEXUAL:	fondling, incest, rape, use of a young person in pornographic photos, films, etc. and exposure of pornographic material to a young person

THE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CONTINUUM

NO TOUCH >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >> FORCIBLE PENETRATION

Exposed to sexual language	Secrecy/ threats	Exhibitionism	Fondling	Oral sex	Molestation (rape)

Separating the FACTS from the ASSUMPTIONS

Myth: Strangers are responsible for most child sexual abuse.
Fact: 10% of abuse is perpetrated by strangers.
30% is perpetrated by family members.
60% is perpetrated by others who are known to the child and their families.

Source: Russell.

Myth: Most child molesters are homosexual.
Fact: Most child molesters are heterosexual.

Sources: Abel; Blanchard, Klassen, Dickey, Kubean, & Blak.

Myth: Children usually lie about sexual abuse.
Fact: Less than 5% of all allegations turn out to be false.

Source: Jones and McGraw.

How common is child sexual abuse?

One in eight males will be abused by the time he is an adult.
One in four females will be abused by the time she is an adult.

Source: Russell and Bolen.

Statistics based on studies defining sexual abuse in terms of "contact" offenses such as fondling or rape.

General Characteristics of Child Sex Offenders:

Externally, they are:
both males and females;
from all walks of life;
most are likely to be well known
and trusted by their victims;
friendly;
often especially polite and courteous;
offer "special" friendship and trust;
plans and organizes activities

Internally, they may have these characteristics:
loner, immature, self-centered, low self-esteem,
identify themselves as victims,
great with kids, charismatic and gregarious,
creating opportunities to be with children

No one of these characteristics defines an offender, but may be part of a pattern.

Why do Abusers abuse Children?

To get the answers, we must look at the questions:

- How can anyone find emotional satisfaction in a sexual relationship with a child?
- How can someone be sexually aroused by a child?
- Why would a person be unable to have emotional and sexual satisfaction from a more "normal" relationship?
- Why wouldn't someone be deterred by simply knowing the social conventions against such behavior?

NOTE: While most abusers were abused themselves, most who were abused do NOT become abusers.

Some Risk Factors related to Child Sexual Abuse:

Disinhibition
(unable to control impulses)
Psychosis
Poor judgment
Psychological immaturity
Lack of conscience
Diminished intellect
Intoxication
Clinical pedophilia
Narcissism

How do perpetrators of abuse gain access to children?

They look like everyone else – you cannot tell by looking at them.
They try to gain trust of parents.
They gain trust of children.
They are often in a trusted role with children.
They try to find jobs that involve children.
They sometimes use their church association to gain trust.

WATCH for warning signs in ADULTS:

PHYSICAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS (touching too much or touching in ways most adults would not touch a child) are one type of warning sign in adults. Some examples: roughhousing or wrestling, tickling, encouraging children to jump on an adult. Perpetrators use Physical Boundary Violations to get the children and adults accustomed to lots of physical contact.

EMOTIONAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS (treating the relationship with a child as if it were a romantic or intimate adult relationship) is a second type of warning sign in adults. Some examples: spending too much time with a child, calling too much, e-mailing too much, getting involved in too many of the child's activities, acting too possessive. Perpetrators use Emotional Boundary Violations to get close to a child and to gain control of the child through the relationship.

BEHAVIORAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS (involving a child in activities that his or her parents would not allow the child to do) is a third type of warning sign in adults. Some examples: ridiculing the beliefs of a child's parents, allowing a child to do things against the wishes of the child's parents, offering children cigarettes, alcohol or drugs, allowing children to look at pornography or to visit inappropriate Internet sites, giving a child gifts without the parents' permission, asking a child to keep secrets from his or her parents. Perpetrators use Behavioral Boundary Violations because once the child has been involved in activities that he or she wants to keep secret, the child is less likely to disclose about the abuse.

WATCH for warning signs in CHILDREN:

For children, some of the short-term effects of sexual abuse could include:

Anxiety
Shame
Self-blame
Guilt
Feeling different
Feeling dirty
Feeling used
Difficulty concentrating

Long-term effects of sexual abuse:
- Suspicion of others
- Depression
- Difficulty with intimacy
- Fearfulness
- Eating disorders

Physical and Behavioral Indicators of Child Abuse

(From the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

Indicators that a child or adolescent may be suffering:

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioral Indicators
Difficulty walking or sitting	Unwilling to change for gym or participate in phys. ed. class
Torn, stained, bloody underclothing	Withdrawal, fantasy, or infantile behavior
Pain, swelling or itching in genital area	
Pain on urination	Bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
Bruises, bleeding or lacerations in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas	Poor peer relationships
	Delinquent or runaway behavior
Vaginal/penile discharge	Reports sexual assault by caretaker
Venereal disease, esp. in pre-teens	Change in performance in school

Emotional Maltreatment

Physical Indicators
- Speech disorders
- Lag in physical development
- Failure-to-thrive
- Hyperactive/disruptive behavior

Behavioral Indicators
- Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.)
- Conduct/learning disorders (antisocial, destructive, etc.)
- Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play, unusual fearfulness)
- Psychoneurotic reactions (hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobias, hypochondria)
- Behavior extremes (compliant/passive; aggressive/demanding)
- Overly adaptive behavior (inappropriately adult; inappropriately infant)
- Developmental lags (mental, emotional)
- Attempted suicide

What keeps children who are abused from telling?

- They are afraid no one will believe them.
- They are afraid they will get into trouble.
- They do not know who to tell.
- They are afraid their parents will be mad, disappointed or will not love them anymore.
- They trust the person who is abusing them, and they don't want to get the person in trouble.
- They do not understand what is happening to them.
- The molester uses special attention to make the child feel cared about or loved.
- They are afraid the molester will hurt them or their family.
- The molester is an adult.
- The molester has power.

ACT when you see warning signs

Most of the time, you will never know for sure that a child is being abused. Most of the time, warning signs are all you will have and if you act right away, you may be able to actually prevent abuse.

If you see warning signs in a particular adult, you might talk to the person, explaining the behavior is a concern; express your concerns to the person in charge; and, if you suspect abuse, call protective services or the police.

If you see warning signs in a child or young person, you might express your concerns to the person about whom you are concerned; express your concerns to the person in charge; and, if you suspect abuse, call protective services or the police.

HANDLING A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

If a child or youth discloses that he or she has been the victim of abuse,

DO say things like:

1. Thank you for telling me.
2. I'm sorry this happened to you.
3. It shouldn't have happened to a child.
4. I'll do my best to get help for you and your family.
5. How are you feeling right now?
6. What are you most worried about?
7. I think you are a very good, brave boy/girl, and it's OK to be upset.

DO NOT say things like:

1. You can tell me anything, and I promise I won't tell anyone else.
2. I promise you I will never let this happen to you again.
3. Your father (mother, stepdad, etc.) is a terrible, sick person.
4. Your father (mother, stepdad, etc.) will (should) go to jail for this.

AVOID: Any form of involved interrogation.
Any discussion of the abuse in front of other children.

See also "Responding to Disclosures" with regard to vulnerable populations on pp 27-29 of this Manual.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

As of July 1, 2015, legislative changes to Mandated Reporting and Information Sharing (S.9/Act 60) went into effect in Vermont (see July 22, 2015 memo from the Family Services Division (FSD) of the Department for Children and Families (DCF) included with this Manual). Visit mandatedreporters.vt.gov to get the latest information on reporting, a sign-up for email updates, and links to relevant information.

If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, although you may not be a mandated reporter, you should report the abuse or neglect by calling FSD at 1-800-649-5285. If a child is in immediate danger, dial 911 or your local police first. Then, call FSD to make a report. Discussing a report with your ministry supervisor or priest is highly recommended.

If you learn of child abuse in a church setting, or suspect abuse is occurring in a church setting, in addition to reporting as noted above, contact the Diocesan Intake Officer, (see contact information on p 59 of this Manual).

VERMONT Family Services Division of the Department of Children and Families
800-649-5285
http://dcf.vermont.gov/

MASSACHUSETTS Department of Children and Families
800-792-5200
http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dcf/child-abuse-neglect/reporting-abuse.html

NEW HAMPSHIRE Division for Children, Youth & Families
800-894-5533 (in-state) or 603-271-6562
http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/

NEW YORK State Office of Children and Family Services
800-342-3720
http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/

Ministry: Safeguarding God's Children and Youth

There is a broad expectation that a church is a place of safety, sanctuary, respect and Christian love for all people. When we are involved in children and youth ministry, our programs are representing the church and, for children, representing God - making for an even greater responsibility to protect children when we're involved in ministry.

In 1997, the 72nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church adopted the following "Children's Charter for the Church" which articulates our calling in regard to the children and youth with whom we minister.

CHILDREN'S CHARTER FOR THE CHURCH

Nurture of THE CHILD — **Children are a heritage from the LORD and the fruit of the womb is a gift. – Psalm 127:4 (BCP)**

THE CHURCH IS CALLED:

- to receive, nurture and treasure each child as a gift from God;
- to proclaim the Gospel to children, in ways that empower them to receive and respond to God's love;
- to give high priority to the quality of planning for children and the preparation and support of those who minister with them;
- to include children, in fulfillment of the Baptismal Covenant, as members and full participants in the Eucharistic community and in the church's common life of prayer, witness and service.

Ministry to THE CHILD — **Then Jesus took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them and blessed them. – Mark 10:16**

THE CHURCH IS CALLED:

- to love, shelter, protect and defend children within its own community and in the world, especially those who are abused, neglected or in danger;
- to nurture and support families in caring for their children, acting in their children's best interest, and recognizing and fostering their children's spirituality and unique gifts;
- to embrace children who seek Christian nurture independently of their parents' participation in the church;
- to advocate for the integrity of childhood and the dignity of all children at every level of our religious, civic and political structure.

Ministry of THE CHILD — **A child shall lead them – Isaiah 11:6**

THE CHURCH IS CALLED:

- to receive children's special gifts as signs of the Reign of God;
- to foster community beyond the family unit, in which children, youth and adults know each other by name, minister to each other, and are partners together in serving Christ in the world;
- to appreciate children's abilities and readiness to represent Christ and his church, to bear witness to him wherever they may be, and according to gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world, and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the church.

(Ministry of the Laity pg 855 BCP)

The trusting environment of a church and it being a community where, traditionally, adults have not been carefully screened or monitored make it a place that could be targeted by perpetrators of abuse. Making our churches and programs safe for our children and youth is a sacred responsibility.

Steps we must take to keep our ministries safe:

1. **Screening of paid staff and volunteers** – the first opportunity to prevent an abuser/molester from ever having contact with children.
    - Careful screening includes:
        Standard application
        Face to face interview
        Reference checks
        Completing sexual offender registry checks
        Criminal background checks
        Letting applicants know you take the safety of children seriously

2. **Interacting** – guided by clear standards known to everyone help children and adults feel safe when expressing affection in ministry and increase the likelihood that someone who does not have good intentions with children will be detected.
    - Appropriate displays of affection:
        Asking permission before touching.
        Hugs.
        Pats on the shoulder or back.
        Hand-shakes.
        "High-fives" and hand slapping.
        Verbal praise.
        Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms.
        Arms around shoulders.
        Holding hands during prayer or when a person is upset.
        Sitting close to small children.
        Kneeling or bending down for hugs with a small child.
        Holding or picking up children 3 years old and younger.
    - Inappropriate displays of affection:
        Any form of unwanted affections.
        Full frontal hugs or "bear hugs".
        Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas
        Laying down or sleeping beside children.
        Massages.
        Patting children on the thigh, knee or leg.

Tickling or wrestling.
Touching or hugging from behind.
Games involving inappropriate touching.
Kisses on the mouth.
Showing affection in isolated areas of the program such as bedrooms, closets, restricted areas or other private rooms.
Compliments that relate to physique or body development.

3. **Monitoring** – allows us to detect problems before they turn into an incident of abuse.
    - Steps involved in monitoring:
        All programs involve more than one adult.
        Have a written supervisory plan.
        Encourage parents to visit.
        Review new programs carefully.
        Keeping doors and windows open.
        Keeping unused rooms locked.

4. **Training** – provides everyone with the tools to keep children safe and puts the power to protect in everyone's hands.
    - What to train:
        Policies about interactions.
        Methods child molesters use to trick children and adults.
        How to respond if they have concerns.
        How abuse happens.
        How sexual abuse affects children and young people.
    - Who should be trained:
        Employees
        Volunteers
        Parents
        Clergy
        Members of congregations
        Children
    - Preventing False Allegations – False allegations are rarely "out of the blue." Most often false allegations occur when an adult uses poor judgment or interacts with children in a way that makes them feel unsafe. Behaviors that have led to false allegations of abuse:
        Meeting alone in isolated places.
        Showing favoritism.
        Engaging in physical contact that was misinterpreted.
        Wearing provocative or revealing attire.
        Meeting in homes and in bedrooms without others present.

Being nude in front of children.
Sleeping in bed with children.
Giving special or secret gifts.
Graphically discussing sexual activities or encouraging others to do so.
Keeping "secrets" about relationships.
Failing to adhere to uniform or accepted standards of affection.
Showing affection when no one else was around.
Staring while others were dressing.
Commenting on children's bodies.
Taking pictures while children are dressing or showering.
Shaming or belittling an individual.

5. **Responding** quickly gives you the power to protect children - the sooner we react, the more likely we are to prevent abuse. If abuse has already occurred, the sooner it is stopped, the more time a child has to heal.
    - Responses:
        Talk to the person involved.
        Report to the police.
        Report to protective service.
        Report anonymously.
        Talk to the person's supervisor.
        Talk to the director of the program.

    - Follow Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth for "Responding to Concerns" (see full policy, pp 45-46):

        "Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies in a parish environment shall immediately report the violation to the Rector and Senior Warden. Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies in a diocesan environment or by a clergy person shall immediately report the violation to the Diocesan Title IV Intake Officer (see Contact Information p 62).

        Anyone who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place at church or in another setting is strongly encouraged to tell the parish priest or another member of the ordained clergy. Any individual mandated by state law to report who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place shall report it to the appropriate civil authority."

        See p 37 of this Manual for reporting information.

- Barriers to reporting sexual abuse:
  Denial – We don't want to believe that abuse occurs.
  Loyalty- We have allegiance to the alleged perpetrator or the organization.
  Fear – We could be wrong or we may not want to be identified.
  Protection – We want to protect the victim from embarrassment or pain.
  Avoidance – We don't want to get caught in the middle.
  Guilt – We should have known or we might be implicated.

- Disclosures:
  If a child discloses abuse:
  Listen.
  Be sensitive to vague disclosures.
  Avoid expressing shock or outrage.
  Don't threaten or condemn the alleged perpetrator.
  Let the person know you believe him or her.
  Tell the person he or she was right to disclose.
  Assure the person the abuse was not his or her fault.
  Reassure the person that he or she will be safe.
  Avoid questions that could make the person feel responsible.
  Get essential details for the report.
  Write down exactly what the person said.
  Follow reporting procedures.

See also "Responding to Disclosures" with regard to vulnerable populations on page 27-29 and disclosure information with regard to children and youth on page 36.

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN CHURCH SETTINGS

- Provide good adult supervision of all activities involving children and youth.
- No convicted sex offenders should EVER be involved with children. No person accused of being a sex offender should be involved with youth or children until the investigation is complete and the person has been cleared.
- Whenever possible, two adults should be present in groups of youth and children. Where there are both boys and girls, it is best if both a male and female leader are present. In an overnight situation, this is essential.
- If there are youth leaders under the age of 21, each should be partnered by an adult.
- If a situation should arise in which a child or adolescent must be alone with an adult, it is advisable to remain in the sight of another adult.
- Keep the doors open whenever possible. If not possible, consider installing windows *in* the doors, or replacing solid doors with Dutch doors.

- Encourage "drop-in" visits by parents and staff to youth and Christian Education classes and events.
- Avoid situations in which clergy, youth leaders, choir directors, etc., must drive children home. Call parents to pick them up if necessary.
- Do careful recruitment, supervision and training for all workers with children and youth.
- Be aware of any pattern of private meetings or activities which may be occurring between any youth or child worker and a particular young person, and discuss the situation with the leader of the activity or group.

For Reflection

During a church school class discussion with second graders, one of the children begins to tell about a dream they have where a monster comes to their bed at night. As you hear the child speak you have suspicions that the monster is a perpetrator of sexual molestation.

What do you do immediately?

After class?
During the next week?
During the following

As a priest, adult youth group leader, or choir director, you have a teenager whose family life is troubled. S/he becomes filled with Christ and hangs on your every word. Each week you receive written poetry, prayers, and drawings from this young person. At church, the young person follows you around and looks for affirmation from you. Frequently he/she tells you how brilliant are your leadership, preaching, musicianship, etc.

List all of your concerns for both the adult and the teen in this situation.

If you are the adult in this situation what is your response?
To the verbal praise?
The physical clinging behavior?
The gift giving?

While lined up for the procession before the main worship service – crucifer, acolytes, senior and junior choir members, and clergy – an adult choir member turns toward a junior choir member and pats the child on the head, repeatedly telling them how cute they are (or what a great haircut they have, beautiful red hair, great dimples, etc.)

What might the motives of the adult be?
How might the young person feel?
What options are given to the young person?
Who has the power in this encounter?
Thinking of this incident, how might it influence your behavior in the future?

Consider the same incident at coffee hour.
How are the dynamics changed?
Who has the power?
What options does the young person have?

Contrast this incident with an adult making eye contact with a child during church or at coffee hour where "peek-a-boo" ensures or a mutual exchange of making faces occurs. How are the incidents the same and how are they different?

You are the priest in charge and a preschool teacher reports to you that a child in her class is swearing, pinching other students, and using sexually explicit language.

What actions do you take and in which order?

How will you respond?
- *To the teacher?*
- *To the student?*
- *To the family?*

Diocese of Vermont Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth

As adopted by Diocesan Council February 17, 2018

Statement of Intent

The aim of this policy is to make the Diocese of Vermont a safe place, safe for those who worship, safe for those who minister, safe for those who come in need, safe for children and safe for all who seek or serve Christ. We believe that this policy helps us live out our Baptismal Covenant to respect the dignity of every human being. A set of expected standards provides the Diocese, its institutions and congregations with practical guidance in achieving the goals of this policy.

Congregations and diocesan institutions shall adopt safe church policies that are at a minimum consistent with the requirements in this policy. (See www.diovermont.org for templates.)

Screening and Selection for Ministry with Children and Youth

The Diocese will do background checks on all clergy who are deployed or licensed to officiate within the Diocese, on all diocesan employees and on those who have leadership responsibilities for youth or children at diocesan events.

Congregations shall do background checks on all employees and any volunteers who regularly work with children or youth.

Volunteers shall not be permitted to work with children or youth until they have been known to the clergy or congregation for at least six months.

Monitoring Programs and Interaction with Children and Youth

Monitoring is essential for keeping children and youth safe, in that it can allow detection of problems before they lead to an incident of abuse.

The current "Standards and Practical Applications for Anyone Volunteering with Children and Youth" shall be followed at diocesan events and activities for children and youth.

At the congregational level, the responsibility for seeing that appropriate monitoring standards are in place rests with the rector or clergy person in charge, the vestry and the congregation's safe church minister.

Education and Training

Congregational policies for the protection of children and youth shall be posted in areas where activities for children and youth usually take place and shall be given to all adults who regularly work with children or youth and to parents.

Congregations shall direct clergy and lay employees, as well as volunteers who work with children or youth, to attend the diocesan Training for a Safer Church on how to prevent child

abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings. Each congregation shall maintain a record of those who have attended such training. Individuals will attend re-certification training every five years.

The Diocese shall require all clergy and employees and volunteers who work with children or youth at diocesan events to attend Training for a Safer Church on how to prevent child abuse and promote healthy boundaries in church settings and will maintain records of those who have attended the training.

The Bishop's Office will approve curriculum and trainers for the requisite training. Current training should be available for those who screen, train or supervise those who regularly work with children or youth.

Responding to Concerns

Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies in a parish environment shall immediately report the violation to the Rector and Senior Warden. Anyone who knows of a violation of these policies in a diocesan environment or by a clergy person shall immediately report the violation to the Diocesan Intake Officer.

Anyone who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place at church or in another setting, is strongly encouraged to tell the parish priest or another member of ordained clergy. Any individual mandated by state law to report who has reason to suspect that child abuse has taken place shall report it to the appropriate civil authority.

Contact Information

The Intake Officer for the Episcopal Church in Vermont is Lynn Bates, Canon to the Ordinary, 800-286-3437 (within Vermont) or 802-863-3431x105; lbates@dioceseofvermont.org.

Vermont's Child Protection Line for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect is 1-800-649-5285, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The website of the Vermont Department of Children and Families is www.dcf.vermont.gov.

Diocese of Vermont Standards and Practical Applications for Anyone Volunteering or Working with Children and Youth

As adopted by Diocesan Council February 17, 2018

Relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry and are central to the life of the church. Relationships in ministry should always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur. These standards and practical applications have been approved by Diocesan Council to help those who minister with children or youth create and maintain safe environments. Policies, standards and codes of conduct are meant to assist in defining healthy and safe relationships as well as behaviors and practices that allow the church to demonstrate love and compassion to children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

All adults ministering with children or youth at diocesan events and activities are asked to review carefully each statement within these Standards before agreeing to adhere to the statements and serving the diocese in ministry with children or youth.

Standards for Screening and Selection for Ministry with Children and Youth

Screening of all paid staff and volunteers who regularly work with children and youth is an essential element in keeping children and youth safe. It is an opportunity to prevent a molester from having contact with children and youth in church programs.

All those working with children or youth must complete and sign an application form which specifically includes a request for personal references, information concerning any prior adjudication in regard to sexual misconduct and acknowledgement of the church's right to conduct a confidential background check.

Background checks shall include the following:

a. the written application
b. a public records check
c. an interview
d. reference checks.

The more access an individual has to children or youth, the more detailed a background check should be.

Adults with leadership responsibilities at an overnight camp or on an extended trip must have a background and reference screening prior to beginning the activity.

The diocese currently recommends congregations use Secure Search (www.securesearch.com) for background and public records checks. See resource information on p 59 for how to set up an account.

Any adult attending an overnight event must have a current safe church certificate filed with their rector or clergy person in charge, and the clergy person must sign off on the adult's registration form.

Adults are defined as 18 years of age or older and at least one full year past high school graduation. Whenever possible, an older person should be placed in a group with older youth participants.

No convicted sex offender should **ever** be involved with children. No person accused of being a sex offender should be involved with youth or children until the investigation is complete and the person has been cleared.

Standards for Monitoring Programs for Children and Youth

Monitoring is essential for keeping children and youth safe in that it can allow detection of problems before they turn into an incident of abuse.

Plans for all events and ministries for children and youth should include at least two unrelated adults present at all times. If unanticipated circumstances result in an adult being alone with children or youth, that adult shall immediately report those circumstances to the Bishop's Office in the case of diocesan events or to the Rector or Senior Warden for congregational events, as appropriate.

Parents should be given appropriate details for all events or activities.

The following are standard ratios of adults to children and youth throughout every event and/or gathering:

Infant to 5 years of age:	1 adult for every 4 children
6-18 years of age:	1 adult for every 5 children or youth

When there are both boys and girls, it is best if both male and female leaders are present; in an overnight event, where there are male and female participants, this is mandatory.

If a situation should arise in which a child or youth must be alone with an adult, they should remain in the sight of another adult.

A media release must be signed for pictures to be displayed on the diocesan Web site, in the diocesan newspaper, or any flyer or publication for the Diocese of Vermont. Names of minors are never used with photographs.

Use rooms that are visible through glass doors or leave doors open.

Show only age appropriate videos and movies. Appropriate means the movie or video is reviewed and screened for sexual content, language, violence and overall message.

G rated films may be shown.

PG videos and movies should not be shown to anyone under the age of 13.

PG13 movies and videos should not be shown to anyone under the age of 13. In addition, parents should be made aware of and approve any PG 13 videos or movies prior to showing it.

If a youth comes to any diocesan activity or event intoxicated (from either drugs or alcohol), arrange to have the person taken home and consult with the event coordinator as to further intervention.

Firearms and concealed weapons are prohibited at any child or youth event or activity. Clergy may make special exceptions for off-duty police officers or others required to carry firearms.

All adults attending diocesan youth events or activities are mandatory reporters and are required to report abuse or suspected abuse immediately as outlined in diocesan policy.

Additional Standards for Programs in Congregations

It may be appropriate for a Sunday School class to have only one teacher as long as at least one other adult can maintain visual contact with the teacher.

Any new programs, trips or events that involve children or youth must be given prior approval by the clergy, and the vestry should be notified in advance of the event.

All events for children or youth shall be made public and no event for children or youth shall take place in a private residence without prior approval by the clergy.

Adults who work with children or youth within a congregation are discouraged from having a separate and private relationship with any unrelated child from church away from sanctioned church youth activities, unless that relationship is known to the clergy.

Each congregation is encouraged to have a Safe Church Minister who is current on safe church issues and training and is not otherwise an employee of the congregation. The Safe Church Minister should be consulted by the clergy, vestry members or others on safe church matters, and should report all questionable or non-standard arrangements to the clergy or a Warden. It is recommended that the Safe Church Minister and the Vestry regularly conduct a "safe church audit" to review practices and policies within the congregation.

A congregation's policies should include the names and phone numbers of the clergy, senior warden, parish Safe Church Minister, and contact person in the Bishop's Office.

A congregation's computers should have adequate password protection.

Congregations should have clear guidelines and adequate supervision (by parish staff or authorized persons) of anyone using a computer to access the Internet. Any activity on a congregation's computer *should not be* considered private and may be accessed by authorized persons.

Maintain an "open door policy," that parents or clergy always have the right to visit and observe a class or program at any time unannounced.

Standards for Overnight Activities and Events

Each participant must submit a completed and signed permission form to the event coordinator to attend an event or activity. Parents and guardians should be given information about the event and be provided emergency contact information in advance.

Prior to an off-site event, a list of participants with parental contact information should be given to the diocesan office for diocesan events or to the church office for congregational events.

All medications, including prescription and over the counter, must be in the original container with clear instructions and the participant's name. Medications are collected upon arrival and returned at the end of the event. Medications will be locked in a lock box and administered by a designated adult.

Sleeping and Rooming Arrangements for Overnight Activities or Events:

- If sleeping in parish hall, gym floor, or large room: males and females must have separate areas to sleep in.
- In a hotel or conference center or tent/camper setting:
  - Ideally, there should be no fewer than 3 same gender youth per room.
  - Choose hotels that have rooms open to the interior of the building rather than to the outside.
  - If possible make arrangements so that an adult room is between two youth rooms (no sharing adjoining bathrooms).
  - Each youth must have a separate bed, bedding and/or sleeping bag.
  - Adults should sleep in modest attire in order to be able to respond quickly to emergency needs.
  - Schedule hall monitoring periodically throughout the night.
  - Create a rooming list that provides the location where each child, youth, and adult is rooming. Post it in ways that are accessible to everyone at the event, but not to the general public.
  - Males may not enter a room where females are sleeping and females may not enter a room where males are sleeping.

Transportation

Anyone transporting children or youth must complete a "Transporting Children and Youth in a Motor Vehicle" form and be screened by a Motor Vehicle Records search for Driving While Intoxicated or any reckless citation prior to transporting children or youth. The form and screening records are then filed in the diocesan office.

Parents must give written permission for any transportation of children or youth.

If children or youth are to be picked up by someone other than a parent or guardian, or dropped off somewhere other than their home, the parent or guardian should indicate that person's name and phone number on the permission form.

At the conclusion of an event, two adult leaders should stay with children and youth until every child and youth has been picked-up. Never leave a child or youth alone waiting for a ride home.

Standards for Adult Leaders and Sponsors

Adults model appropriate behaviors to children and youth. Therefore, adults abide by the same covenant as youth. Adults are expected to model positive nurturing relationships that include no profane language and no practical jokes that would be physically or emotionally harmful.

Adults will use the "Standards for Appropriate Affection" [below] to talk about touch and boundaries at all events and gatherings, establishing principles of respectful behavior while at the same time teaching appropriate touch and boundaries.

It is inappropriate for a leader or any adult to be alone with a child if out of sight of another adult.

Secret meetings and activities with a child, children or youth are inappropriate.

Physical punishment or discipline, harsh language, degrading punishment, hazing or bullying should never be used or allowed.

Adult leaders and sponsors shall never, under any circumstances:

- provide children or youth with non-sacramental alcohol, illegal drugs, pornography,
- consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs at any event at which children or youth are present,
- be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs at any children's or youth event or activity,
- engage in illegal behavior or allow other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior,
- engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth,
- discuss their own sexual activities or fantasies with children or youth.

Standards for Interacting with Children and Youth

The following standards of positive and appropriate forms of affection and inappropriate forms of affection are to be carefully followed by all adults working around or with children and youth:

Positive and appropriate forms of interaction include:

Brief hugs
Pats on the shoulder or back
Handshakes
“High-fives”
Verbal praise
Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
Arms around shoulders
Holding hands while walking with small children
Sitting beside small children
Kneeling or bending down for brief hugs with small children
Holding hands during prayer

Inappropriate forms of interaction include:

Lengthy embraces
Kisses
Holding children other than infants or toddlers on the lap
Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers

Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms
Occupying a bed with a child or youth
Touching knees or legs of children or youth
Wrestling with children or youth
Tickling children or youth
Piggyback rides
Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult
Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth
Any form of unwanted affection
Comments or compliments, spoken, written, or electronic, that relate to physique or body development, i.e. "You sure are developing," or "You look hot in those jeans."
Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch, whether or not it is covered by other clothing
Giving gifts or money that show favoritism to individual children or youth
Private meals alone with individual children or youth

Adults should not dress, undress, bathe or shower in the presence of youth and adults should not be in the room where youth dress, undress, bathe or shower.

If a child or youth needs to undress (for example, to get into a costume or for first aid) call another adult of the same gender as the child to be nearby. Be intentional about safe church practices for trips to the bathroom for those who need assistance.

Additional Information

See Contact Information and Resources at the end of this Manual for information on background and public record checks. Additional information and support for complying with this policy can be obtained at training events offered by the Episcopal Church in Vermont, from your congregation's Safe Church Minister or the diocesan Safe Church Training Coordinator.

Social Media and Other Forms of Digital Communication

The amount of information available online continues to expand. While most online communication once took place through e-mail or instant messaging services, now more and more content is being shared publically and is widely visible. Sites like Twitter, Facebook, and blogs can provide considerable benefits for churches. These social networking services come with certain risks. Understanding how these websites work and should be used is helpful in avoiding the pitfalls of social media.

Congregations are encouraged to develop specific guidelines and policies relating to their use of social media both within and outside of the congregation. With gratitude for the work and generosity of the Office of Pastoral Response of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut for developing these guidelines and the Connecticut Conference of United Church of Christ, upon which the guidelines are based, the following suggested practices and guidelines for use of social networking websites and other forms of digital communication are offered as a resource to that end.

Suggested Practices & Guidelines for Use of Social Networking Websites & Other Forms of Digital Communication

As an ever-increasing number of people use and prefer digital communication over other forms, it is essential that the church be present in this mission field. Social networking sites, on-the-spot communication devices and email can enhance communication, faith sharing and deepen relationship. The following recommended practices and guidelines apply commonly accepted principles of healthy boundaries and safe church to the virtual world of digital networking and communication.

Commonly Accepted Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Church

- Adults have more power than children and youth.
- Clergy have more power than people with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- The mutuality of friendship cannot exist when there is a disparity of power.
- Two unrelated adults must be able to maintain visual contact with each other any time they engage in ministry with children or youth.
- Windows in doors allow transparency of interactions with children, youth and adults who may be vulnerable.

General Information about Digital Communications

- All communication sent digitally (email, social networking sites, notes or posts, etc.) is NOT CONFIDENTIAL and may be shared or reposted to others.
- Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent, as a window in the door provides transparency in the physical world.
- In the virtual world healthy boundaries and safe church practices must be adhered to as they are in the physical world.
- In the virtual world, "friend" can mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate through that medium. In the physical world, friend can mean much more in terms of intimacy, self-disclosure, mutuality and expectations for relationship.
- Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable populations apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth:

Social Networking Sites-Relationships

1. Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile. Individual personal profiles are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Adults should not submit "friend" requests to minors or youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults. Youth may ask to be "friends", and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
2. If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence.
3. Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to whom they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group account that youth may join. Youth requesting to "friend" an adult can then be invited to join this group rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult's personal profile account. The purpose of these two separate accounts/profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and real family, friends and colleagues.
4. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or the Department of Children and Families (DCF). If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with DCF and/or police. The DCF hotline is.

Social Networking Sites-Groups

1. Closed groups, but not "hidden" groups, should be used for youth groups (J2A, Rite 13, administrators, confirmation, pilgrimage, mission trips, etc.).
2. Groups should have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth.
3. Invitations to youth to join the group should be made by youth administrators, unless a youth previously asked an adult administrator to invite him/her to join the group.
4. Behavioral covenants should be created to govern what content is appropriate and inappropriate for an online youth group.
5. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or DCF. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with DCF and/or police.
6. Inappropriate material that does not raise suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should immediately be removed from the site.
7. Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established behavioral covenant) during a church sponsored event or activity should be addressed by adult youth leaders and parents.
8. Social networking groups for youth should be open to parents of current members.
9. Parents should be informed that the content of youth pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of adult youth leaders.
10. Adult leaders of youth groups and former youth members who, due to departure, removal from position, or are no longer eligible because they "aged-out" of a program should be immediately removed from digital communication with youth groups via social networking sites, list serves, etc.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Adults:

Social Networking Sites-Relationships

1. Clergy are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile to shield both adult and youth members from viewing content that may be inappropriate.
2. Individual personal profiles of clergy are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers. Clergy should not submit "friend" requests to parishioners and others to whom they minister. The disparity of power may not give the other person the ability to decline such request.
3. Clergy who want to connect via a social networking website with parishioners are strongly encouraged to set up a group account that all parishioners may join. The purpose of having a personal profile and parish group is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with parishioners and real family, friends and colleagues.

4. Clergy should consider the impact of declining a "friend" request from parishioners. These encounters may create a tension in "real world" relationships. Clergy can direct "friend" requests from parishioners to the parish's group page.
5. Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to establish church sponsored digital communications groups to maintain contact with youth members.
6. When a cleric's ministry at a parish or other ministry setting ends, the cleric should remove parishioners as "friends" or contacts in all forms of digital communications.

Recommendations for digital communications and content:
Behavioral Covenants
1. Covenants should acknowledge that materials posted on Church Sponsored sites (and/or group pages) are NOT CONFIDENTIAL.
2. Covenants should acknowledge that content deemed inappropriate will be removed from the site or group page.
3. Covenants for communities of faith should address the following issues:

- Appropriate language
- Eligibility of membership to join a social networking group. Things to consider include whether you have to be a member of a parish or youth group and whether there are age requirements/restrictions for participation for youth groups.
- Loss of eligibility of membership and removal from the social networking group. Consider how and when members will be removed from the group due to moving away, leaving the faith community, becoming too old for youth group, clergy leaving to minister to another parish or exclusion from ministry positions for other reasons
- Who, how and when may photos be tagged (members identified by name; for example, individuals may tag themselves in photos but should not tag others)
- Appropriate and inappropriate behavior of members (bullying, pictures that depict abuse, violence, sexual acts, etc.) and the consequence for inappropriate behavior.
- Compliance with mandated reporting laws regarding suspected abuse.

Recommendations for Video Chats, Blogs or Video Blogs
1. Adults should refrain from initiating video chats with youth.
2. Participants in a video chat or blog should consider what will be shown in the video such as their surroundings, their clothing/state of dress, etc.
3. All transcripts of on-line text chats, video chats, blogs or video blogs should be saved when possible.
4. All clergy and adults engaged in ministry with youth should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read by or visible to youth. Your voice is often considered the voice of the church.

Recommendations for Publishing/Posting Content Online

1. Congregations must inform participants when they are being videoed because church buildings are not considered public space.
2. Any faith community that distributes video of its worship services or activities on the web or via other broadcast media MUST post signs that indicate the service will be broadcast.
3. All communities of faith should take care to secure signed Media Release forms from adults and guardians of minor children who will or may participate in activities that may be photographed or videoed for distribution.
4. Photos that are published on church sponsored sites should not include name or contact information for minor children or youth.

Recommendations for Use of Email or Texting (Includes Twitter)

1. Email can be an appropriate and effective means of communicating basic factual information such as the time of an event, agenda for a meeting, text of a document, etc.
2. Email is not an appropriate communication method for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation.
3. If an email message is longer than a couple of sentences, then the matter might more properly be addressed via live conversation.
4. Humor and sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted in an email.
5. All email users should take a moment to consider the ramifications of their message before clicking on the "send" or "reply to all" button.

Additional resources for congregations to develop specific guidelines and practices for social networking include:

www.churchsafety.com
: provides general information about setting up a church website.

www.justinwise.net/social-media
: includes the Ultimate List of Social Media Policies for Churches and Ministries and denominational templates.

Social Networking for Youth

Social networking sites, chat rooms, virtual worlds, and blogs are how teens and tweens socialize online. It is important for adults to teach them how to navigate these spaces safely. Those who minister with our children in the church setting also should know about safe networking skills and sites for children and youth. Among the pitfalls that come with online socializing are sharing too much information or posting comments, photos, or videos that can damage a reputation or hurt someone's feelings.

Bullying and boundaries are also to be considered in the area of social networking. The best safe church practices should always be considered and utilized when there is communication via social networking sites or discussion of its use.
Those who minister with our youth need to be especially open and aware of the opportunity to discuss the topics of social networking and bullying. There are many resources for parents and adult leaders that can make a significant impact on keeping our youth safe.

Some suggestions include:

- Remind them that online actions have consequences
- Limit what they share
- Encourage online manners
- Encourage limiting access to profiles
- Encourage parents to talk with their kids about what they are doing online
- Let youth know about the church's practices and guidelines for social media and how it affects them

It is important to remember that best safe church practices should always be considered and utilized when there is communication via social media sites or discussion of its use.

Additional resources:

www.onguardonline.gov (Kids and Socializing Online).
www.internetsafety.org

Contact Information

Diocesan Title IV Coordinator	The Rev. Canon Walter B.A. Brownridge Canon to the Ordinary wbrownridge@diovermont.org 802-863-3431 x112
Diocesan Title IV Intake Officers	The Rev. Janet K. Brown janetkbrown88@comcast.net The Rev. Bram Kranichfeld bkranichfeld@gmail.com
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VT Adult Protective Services	802-871-3333 800-564-1612 www.dlp.vermont.gov/abuse-reporting-form
VT Department of Children and Families	800-649-5285 www.dcf.vermont.gov

Resources

Background and Public Record Checks

SecureSearch Faith - www.securesearchfaith.com

- With this program the **Account Signup Fee of $39 Fee will be waived**. Once activated, your Church Screening Administrator will receive an activation email with confirmed login credentials to access your secure account for processing background checks.
- **The Protection Package** ($14 per background check) provides the following:
  - **Multi-State Criminal records database Search**
  - **National Sex Offender Records Search (true 50 State search)**
  - **SSN Verification**
  - **Alias/Maiden Name Records Search**
  - **SSN Death Index Search**
  - **Re-verification of Actual & Possible Records prior to release**

To access the SecureSearch Faith New Account Signup Form:
http://www.securesearchfaith.com/securesearch-faith-sign-up/

Bullying:

www.bullyingstatistics.org

Social Media and Other Digital Communication

www.churchsafety.com
provides general information about setting up a church website.

www.justinwise.net/social-media
includes the Ultimate List of Social Media Policies for Churches and Ministries and denominational templates.

www.onguardonline.gov
Kids and Socializing Online

www.internetsafety.org
pays special attention to cyber-bullying